DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 362 000 FL 021 341

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TITLE Newcomers: Different Language, Different Culture, Big Challenge.
SPONS AGENCY Austin Independent School District, Tex.
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association (Austin, TX, January 28-30, 1993).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *English (Second Language); High Schools; High School Students; Immigrants; Intensive Language Courses; Language Proficiency; *Limited English Speaking; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Second Language Programs; Student Characteristics
IDENTIFIERS Austin Independent School District TX

ABSTRACT

The Austin (Texas) Independent School District (AISD) has long received federal grant funds under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to supplement its regular bilingual and English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) programs. In 1990-91, AISD was awarded a 3-year grant to serve a population of limited-English-proficient (LEP) high school students termed "newcomers." For the purpose of the program, a newcomer was defined as a student who had been in the United States for 1 year or less. These students typically have limited or interrupted schooling in their home countries and a wide range of literacy skills. Because increasing numbers of immigrants were enrolling at three AISD high school campuses, AISD developed its Title VII Newcomers Program, whose goal is to improve the English proficiency and the achievement skills of the targeted students. Class size is kept relatively small, and the students receive 3 hours of intensive English instruction daily, which includes listening, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. In addition, students may enroll in a variety of subject areas to complete their schedules. The intent of the program is for students to attend regular ESL classes at the end of 1 year's service. It was decided that, if a student entered the program late in the school year, or was unable to make the transition, allowances could be made at the discretion of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee located at each campus. (Author/AB)

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NEWCOMERS: DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, DIFFERENT CULTURE, BIG CHALLENGE

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Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the
Southwest Educational Research Association,
Austin, Texas, January, 1993

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Publication No. 92.15

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ABSTRACT

The Austin (Texas) Independent School District (AISD) has long received federal grant funds under Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act to supplement its regular bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. In 1990-91, AISD was awarded a three-year grant to serve a population of limited-English-proficient (LEP) high school students termed "newcomers." In addition to being limited English proficient, these students had recently arrived in the United States. For the purpose of the program, a newcomer was defined as a student who had been in the United States for one year or less. These students typically have limited or interrupted schooling in their home countries and a wide range of literacy skills. Increasing numbers of immigrants were enrolling at three AISD high school campuses. To serve the special needs of such students, AISD developed its Title VII Newcomers Program, whose goal is to improve the English language proficiency and the achievement skills of the targeted students. All language backgrounds are eligible for the program, with Spanish being the primary language of most (68% in 1991-92) of the students.

The program is designed to provide a sheltered environment for participants. Class size is kept relatively small, and the students receive three hours of intensive English instruction daily, which includes listening, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. In addition, students may enroll in a variety of subject areas to complete their schedules. A locally funded teacher and a grant-funded teacher assistant are assigned to each of the three campuses. The intent of the program is for students to attend regular English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at the end of one year's service. If a student entered the program late in the school year, or is unable to make the transition, allowances can be made at the discretion of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee located at each campus.

The budget for the program was $140,000 in each of the 1990-91 and 1991-92 school years. A total of 108 students was served in 1990-91; in 1991-92, 104 students.

Evaluations conducted by AISD's Office of Research and Evaluation of the first two years of program implementation have revealed that:

- Title VII newcomers are predominantly low income, overage for their grade, dominant or monolingual in a language other than English, and below grade level academically. Nonetheless, these at-risk students have demonstrated a commitment to attending school and moving forward with their education.

- Newcomers gain raw score points on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) from pre- to posttest (an average of 9 in 1990-91, 16 in 1991-92), which indicates that they are improving their abilities in English.

- Compared to similar LEP students (nonprogram students monolingual or dominant in a language other than English), the Title VII newcomers have performed better on measures of school success such as school attendance, grade point average, credits earned, and dropout rate.

- Staff opinion in general was that the program was very effective and that it assisted the students in making the transition to English and to the school culture. Newcomers also thought that the program was very beneficial.

NEWCOMERS: DIFFERENT LANGUAGE, DIFFERENT CULTURE, BIG CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Increasing numbers of non- or limited-English-speaking immigrants, many with little or interrupted schooling in their home countries and poor literacy skills in their home languages, are coming to the United States. The influx of these students is having a tremendous impact on school districts which are insufficiently equipped to deal with their special linguistic and educational needs. This paper presents evaluation findings from the first two years of a three-year Title VII program designed to address the specific needs of these atypical students.

Perspective

For many years, our urban, Texas school district has been awarded U.S. Department of Education Title VII funds to supplement its regular bilingual and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. In the 1989-90 school year, as the District was completing a five-year grant cycle which helped to serve middle school and high school limited-English-proficient (LEP) students, it became apparent that increasing numbers of LEP students who were new arrivals to the U.S. had begun enrolling in District high schools. For staff, it was clear that the standard offering of ESL classes supplementing the regular school curriculum would not be adequate to meet the needs of these special students. For this reason and because of the disproportionate impact on the District of the relatively small number of immigrant students, it was decided to apply Title VII funds exclusively toward the needs of this growing population. The service concept developed was to make three high school campuses "newcomer" centers, at which targeted students could be provided with additional assistance in learning English, become oriented to the U.S. culture, and begin as soon as possible to earn necessary credits and satisfy all requirements toward high school graduation. The intent of the program is for students to remain in the program only one year, at the end of which they would make the transition to regular ESL classes.

In its first year, 1990-91, the program served a total of 108 students. In 1991-92, 104 students were served. By August 1991 the Title VII Newcomers Program was well established in the three high schools and able to accommodate students from their respective attendance areas as well as curriculum transfers. At this time, students from other attendance areas have expressed an interest in the Newcomers Program, but they have had difficulty making the necessary transportation arrangements. Three additional high schools have inquired about the Newcomers Program's model and are considering the possibility of replicating it on their campuses.

Program Description

In 1990-91, AISD was awarded a three-year Title VII grant to serve a population of limited-English-proficient (LEP) high school students termed "newcomers." In addition to being limited-English-proficient, these students had recently arrived in the United States. The Title VII Newcomers Program was funded for its second year during the summer of 1991. For the purposes of the program, *a newcomer was defined as a student who has been in the United States for one year or less*. These students typically have limited or interrupted schooling in

their home countries and a wide range of literacy skills. Increasing numbers of immigrants continue enrolling at three high school campuses. To serve the needs of such students, AISD developed its Title VII Newcomers Program. All language backgrounds are eligible for the program, with Spanish being the primary language of most (68% in 1991-92) of the students.

The goal of the Title VII Newcomers Program is to improve the English language proficiency and the achievement skills of the target students. The program is designed to provide a sheltered environment for its participants. Class size is kept relatively small, and the students receive three hours of intensive English instruction daily which includes listening, reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. The students receive credit for English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Correlated Language Arts, and Reading Improvement. In addition, students may enroll in a variety of subject areas (e.g., prealgebra, algebra, biology, typing, Spanish, art, and physical education) to complete their schedules. A teacher and a teacher assistant are assigned to each of the three campuses. The intent of the program is for students to attend regular English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at the end of one year. If a student entered the program late in the school year, or is unable to make the transition, allowances can be made at the discretion of the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee located at each campus. In the 1990-91 school year, a total of 108 students was served by the program; in 1991-92, 104 students were served by the program. Program funding for each year was $140,000.

METHOD

Evaluation Overview

Both the 1990-91 and 1991-92 evaluations focused on the following main questions:

- Did the Title VII newcomers improve their English language acquisition as a result of the program?
- Did the Title VII newcomers improve their academic achievement skills as a result of the program?
- Did the program effectively orient the students to their new life in the U.S.?
- Has the presence of the teacher assistant in the classroom had a positive impact on the students?

In addition to these questions, both year's studies sought to determine the extent to which the program was an effective model for addressing the needs of this special population, that is, whether newcomers were helped sufficiently to be able to stay in school, engage in a range of school experiences, and progress successfully through school to graduation. To this end, the 1991-92 evaluation collected data about "former" (1990-91) newcomers.

Data Collection

Evaluation data were collected from a variety of sources:

- The District's Student Master File and LEP file provided basic information about the students such as home language, Language Assessment Battery (LAB) scores, language dominance, school mobility, and program entry and exit dates.

- ORE's generic evaluation system (GENESYS), which accesses many other student databases (e.g., standardized test scores) on the mainframe to create a standard report on groups of interest, supplied demographic, progress (e.g., attendance, dropout rate, grade point average), and achievement information about the newcomer students both while they were in the program and after they exited.

- Interviews were conducted with program staff to obtain and update student information and to gather opinion information about the program.

- Administrators, teachers, teacher assistants, and Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) chairpersons completed a staff survey in which they rendered their assessments of the program.

- Trilingually translated student surveys were completed by program participants in an effort to capture their perceptions of the program.

- ORE's generic evaluation system (GENESYS) supplied demographic and achievement information for both former and current newcomer students.

In April 1991 and again in April 1992, the students in the Title VII Newcomers Program were asked to complete a survey as a classroom activity. The teachers and their assistants administered the surveys and were available to assist the students with any questions. The surveys were available in English and Spanish versions (and in 1991-92 in a Vietnamese version), and the students could choose the language which was most comfortable for them. Of the 80 newcomers, 70 (88%) were in attendance to complete the survey on the day it was administered.

In May 1992, individual interviews were conducted with two graduating seniors in an effort to identify some of the characteristics that had contributed to the students' success.

Analyses

For comparison purposes, in each year's study the performance of Title VII newcomers was compared to a group consisting of nonprogram students whose language dominance was A or B, dominant or monolingual in the native tongue, and who attended AISD high schools but were not recent arrivals to the United States. Measures of achievement and other success indicators, including credits earned, grade point average (GPA), attendance, and dropout rate, were obtained for each year's comparison group.

Intake data were summarized to provide a profile of the characteristics of the newcomer students. Of interest were the newcomers' ages, countries of origin, educational attainments prior to program entry, and length of time in the U.S.

Survey and interview data were analyzed to assess participant opinion about the strengths and weaknesses of the program as implemented.

RESULTS

Summary

After two years of study, the major findings about the program are summarized below:

1. The program students are predominantly low income, overage for their grade, dominant or monolingual in a language other than English, and below grade level academically. Nonetheless, these at-risk students demonstrated a commitment to attending school and moving forward with their education.

2. Title VII newcomers gained raw score points on the (LAB) from pre- to posttest (an average of 9 in 1990-91, 16 in 1991-92), which indicates that they are improving their abilities in English.

3. Compared to similar LEP students, the newcomers performed better on measures of school success such as school attendance and grade point average. They demonstrated improvement in their credits earned, and their dropout rate was lower than predicted.

4. The opinion of the staff in general was that the program was very effective and that it assisted the students in making the transition to English and to the school culture.

5. The opinion of the newcomers was that the program was very beneficial not only academically but also as they made the transition to a different language and to the culture of the United States.

Student Characteristics

In both the first, 1990-91, and second, 1991-92, program years, **the newcomers were predominantly from low-income families, overage for their grade (therefore at risk), and monolingual or dominant in a primary language other than English.**

The ethnic diversity of the newcomers population did change somewhat from the first to the second year. In 1991-92, the program had fewer students from Spanish-speaking countries than the previous year. Most (68%) of the 104 students served were from Spanish-speaking countries; among these countries were Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Peru, Venezuela and Argentina. Of the remaining students, 24% were from Vietnam, and 7% were from Russia, China, and Korea. Nearly all (84%) were from low-income families and were either dominant (30%) or monolingual (14%) in their primary language.

The age range of newcomers was from 13 to 20 with most of the students (84% in 1990-91 and 77% in 1991-92) being 15 to 18 years old. Age is an important variable because being overage for the grade (two or more years older than expected for the grade level as of September 1) is one of the key indicators of a student's being "at risk" of dropping out. In 1990-91 and 1991-92, 74% and 59% of the newcomers, respectively, were considered overage for their grade level.

Figure 1 shows the grade distribution of Title VII program students for both program years.

FIGURE 1
GRADE LEVELS OF TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

GRADE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
9	62	64	57%	62%
10	26	26	24%	25%
11	20	14	19%	13%
TOTAL	**108**	**104**	**100%**	**100%**

Figure 2 shows the ethnicity and home language of the newcomers in each year of the program.

FIGURE 2
ETHNICITY/HOME LANGUAGE OF TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

ETHNICITY/ HOME LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
Hispanic	78	71	72%	68%
Vietnamese	30	25	28%	24%
Other*	0	7	0%	7%
TOTAL	**108**	**103**	**100%**	**99%**

* Russian, Korean, Chinese

Figure 3 illustrates the language dominance of the newcomers for both program years.

FIGURE 3
LANGUAGE DOMINANCE OF TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

DOMINANCE	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
A/Monolingual	17	15	16%	14%
B/Dominant	90	83	83%	80%
C/Bilingual	1	2	1%	2%
Not on file	0	4	0%	4%
TOTAL	**108**	**104**	**100%**	**100%**

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Figure 4 shows the countries of origin of the Title VII newcomers.

FIGURE 4
COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN OF
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

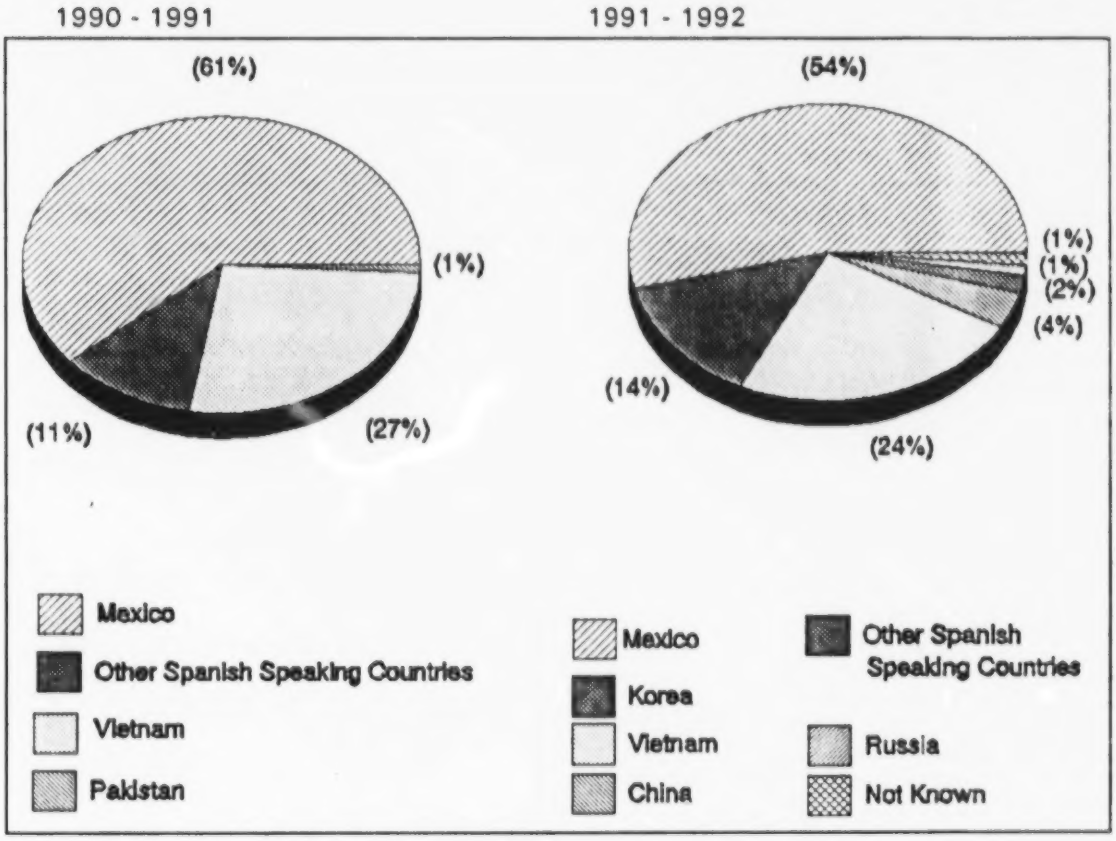

Figure 5 shows the number and percent of students from rural and urban areas in their home countries.

FIGURE 5
URBAN/RURAL ORIGIN OF TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

AREA	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
Urban	77	70	71%	67%
Rural	28	30	26%	29%
Not Known	3	4	3%	4%
TOTAL	**108**	**104**	**100%**	**100%**

Most newcomers came to the U.S. from an urban area in their home country.

Figure 6 illustrates for both program years the years of education the program students had in their home countries. About two thirds of the students had primary and secondary schooling (defined as grades 1-9), and about one third had preparatory schooling (grades 10-12).

FIGURE 6
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS' EDUCATION
IN THEIR HOME COUNTRIES

GRADE LEVELS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
0-6	12	13	11%	12%
7-9	58	57	54%	55%
10-12	35	29	32%	28%
Not Known	3	5	3%	5%
TOTAL	**108**	**104**	**100%**	**100%**

Figure 7 illustrates for both program years the length of time the newcomers had been in the U.S. prior to enrolling in the program. The majority of students had been in the country no more than 8 months; more than three quarters had been in the U.S. for one year or less.

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FIGURE 7
LENGTH OF TIME IN THE U.S. FOR
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS

TIME	NUMBER OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92	PERCENT OF STUDENTS 90-91	91-92
0-4 Months	54	66	50%	64%
5-8 Months	20	12	19%	12%
9-12 Months	17	13	16%	13%
More Than One Year	14	6	13%	5%
Not Known	3	7	2%	6%
TOTAL	**108**	**104**	**100%**	**100%**

English Language Proficiency

Student Performance on the LAB

The Language Assessment Battery (LAB) is a language proficiency test used to evaluate English oral language acquisition. The LAB has been used by AISD for many years to measure English language skills of LEP students. The maximum raw score on the LAB is 92. All newcomers were given a pretest either in the fall or early spring of each year. The students were administered a posttest at the end of the spring. Pretest and posttest scores were compared to determine if the students, on the average, had improved their English proficiency. Improved performance would be indicative of increased proficiency in the English language.

In 1990-91, there were 65 students in all from the three campuses who had been both pre- and posttested with the LAB; in 1991-92, there was a total of 80 students. In 1990-91, the average score for the pretest was 37, while the average posttest score was 46. The following year, the average score for the pretest was 33, and the average score for the posttest was 49 (see Figure 8). These average gains of 9 and 16 raw score points for the two years respectively indicated that *the students were improving their abilities in English.*

Figure 8 shows the performance on the LAB of the Title VII newcomers.

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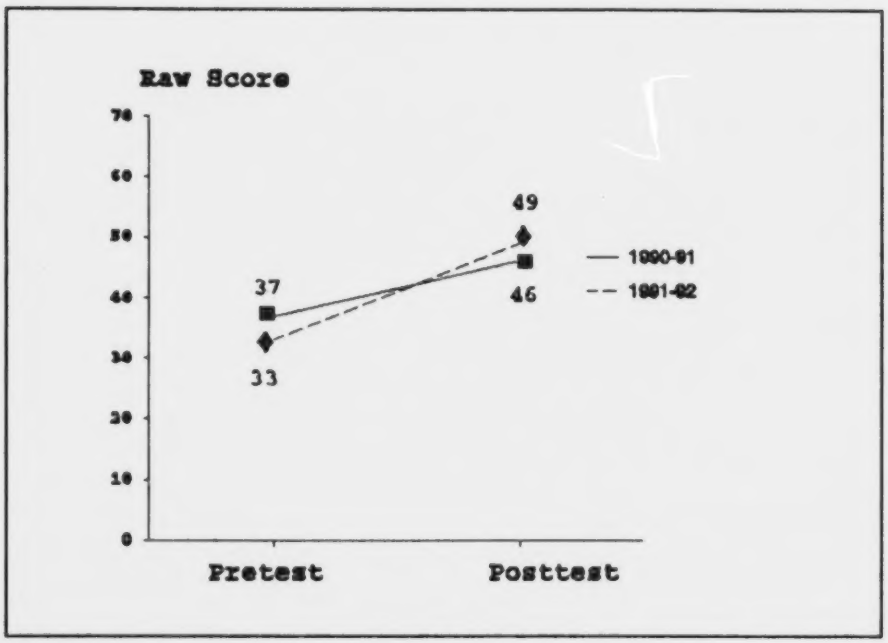
FIGURE 8
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS
AVERAGE LAB SCORE GAINS



Whether this gain represents a good, or typical, gain for these students is unclear. In previous years, Title VII LEP students have shown similar gains. Title VII newcomers were tested in the fall or spring semesters depending on program entry; therefore, the number of months between pretest and posttest varied across students. Individual gains were not being compared; only the group average was considered. Because of the variance in the pre- and posttest time periods, this year's and previous years' Title VII students may not be comparable. Nonetheless, the performance of previous years' students at least provides a context in which to assess the gains made by this year's students.

This is not to suggest that the newcomers are proficient yet in English. In 1976, the New York City Public Schools, in which the LAB was normed, used the 20th percentile rank, which corresponds to a raw score in the mid-70's, as the cutoff for what they termed "effectiveness" in English. Although this is an arbitrary cutoff point, it can be of use in giving meaning to the Title VII newcomers' average posttest scores. For these students to score 70+ on the LAB, they would need to answer approximately 50-55% more of the test items correctly. Gains were clearly accomplished by the students, but the students continue to be in need of specialized instruction.

For comparison purposes, the Title VII newcomers were compared to a group consisting of nonprogram students whose language dominance is A or B, dominant or monolingual in the native tongue, who are attending AISD high schools, but who are not recent arrivals to the United States. In 1990-91, the students comprising this comparison group numbered from 289-311 depending on the particular measure being compared. In 1991-92, the number of students in the comparison group was 362.

Achievement

TAAS

The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is the state-mandated, criterion-referenced testing program which is administered to students in grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11 (Exit Level). The Exit-Level tests must be mastered as part of graduation requirements and are offered two times a year. LEP students may be given a one-time-only LEP exemption at grades 3, 5, 7, and 9. A LEP exemption is not available at the exit level.

Ninth-Grade TAAS

Of the 38 newcomers who were eligible to take the ninth-grade TAAS in October 1990:

- 31 students (82%) took the LEP exemption, and
- 5 students (13%) took the TAAS test.

None of the newcomers mastered any of the TAAS tests.

Of the 42 newcomers who were eligible to take the ninth-grade TAAS in October 1991:

- 37 students (86%) took the LEP exemption, and
- 6 students (14%) took the TAAS test.

None of the newcomers mastered any of the TAAS tests.

Eleventh-Grade TAAS

In October 1990 there were 15 newcomers eligible to take the Exit-Level test. Of those, 14 were tested and one was absent. Twelve students took the test twice (in October and April).

- Ten students (71%) mastered Mathematics.
- Three students (21%) mastered Reading, and
- Two students (14%) mastered Writing.

In October 1991 only four newcomers were eligible to take the Exit-Level test.

- Two students (50%) passed the mathematics portion.
- Two students (50%) did not master any tests.

In April 1992 only five students were eligible to be tested. Of the five students taking the Exit-Level TAAS, two students were from the fall semester and three were from the spring semester.

- Two students (40%) mastered the mathematics portion of the test.
- Three students (60%) did not master any tests.

These results suggest that, when eligible to be tested, the newcomers seem to pass the mathematics section of the Exit Level TAAS on their first attempt. This success may be attributed to mathematics skills not being as language dependent as the skills assessed in the reading and writing sections of the test.

NAPT

AISD administers a norm-referenced test to all students, in grades 1-11, who are considered capable of attaining a valid score. In the spring of 1992, at the high school level, the Norm-Referenced Assessment Program for Texas (NAPT) was administered at grades 9-11.

Figure 9 shows the performance of the Title VII newcomers who were administered the NAPT in spring 1991 and spring 1992, the performances of their comparison groups, and differences ("DIFF") among the groups.

FIGURE 9
TITLE VII VS. COMPARISON GROUPS
MEAN GRADE EQUIVALENT SCORES AND DIFFERENCES

SUBJECTS AND GRADES	NEWCOMERS 1990-91			COMPARISON GROUP 1990-91		NEWCOMERS 1991-92			COMPARISON GROUP 1991-92	
	N	GE	DIFF	N	GE	N	GE	DIFF	N	GE
READING										
9	50	4.6	-.8	103	5.4	32	5.0	-1.8	109	6.8
10	23	4.9	-1.4	73	6.3	16	5.8	-.4	96	6.2
11	19	5.6	-1.1	48	6.7	6	5.7	-1.0	65	6.7
MATHEMATICS										
9	51	6.7	-.5	103	7.2	33	6.3	-.6	110	6.9
10	23	7.5	-.2	74	7.7	16	9.7	+1.1	96	8.6
11	19	9.5	+.1	49	9.4	6	9.5	0	64	9.5
LANGUAGE										
9	52	4.8	-.8	102	5.6	31	4.9	-2.0	111	6.9
10	23	4.5	-1.8	74	6.3	15	5.5	-1.5	90	7.0
11	19	6.6	+.4	49	6.2	6	8.1	+.2	65	7.9
SOCIAL STUDIES										
9	52	6.2	-.9	104	7.1	29	5.2	-2.1	111	7.3
10	22	6.9	-.7	75	7.6	15	7.7	-1.0	93	8.7
11	18	7.3	-.6	51	7.9	6	8.1	-.7	65	8.8
SCIENCE										
9	52	5.8	-1.1	104	6.9	28	7.4	-.5	111	7.9
10	22	6.6	-1.3	75	7.9	15	7.4	-1.4	94	8.8
11	18	7.7	-1.2	51	8.9	6	8.1	-1.1	65	9.2

As shown in Figure 9, the performance of the 1990-91 and 1991-92 newcomers on the NAPT is generally below that of their respective comparison groups. However, out of 30 comparisons of their performance with that of other similar LEP students, there were five instances in which the newcomers' mean grade equivalents were higher than those of comparison students, and one in which the mean grade equivalents were the same.

Other Measures of School Success

One way to evaluate whether students in the District are succeeding in their education is to look at indices like attendance, dropout rate, grade point average, etc.

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Graduation Rate

Because there were no 12th-grade Title VII newcomers in either program year, the graduation rate will not be discussed. The graduation rate of former (1990-91) Title VII newcomers is discussed in a later section.

Dropouts

The problem of school dropouts is a tremendous concern nationwide. As a group, the newcomers are at a greater risk because they exhibit more of the characteristics associated with the population that tends to drop out of high school. The Title VII Newcomers Program provides a supportive environment that makes a concerted effort to enhance the students' academic skills with the purpose of keeping them in school. *The predicted dropout rate for the newcomers was higher than the obtained dropout rate, meaning that the program did better than anticipated in keeping students in school.*

Figure 10 shows dropout rates (through the fifth 6th-weeks period of the school year) for Title VII newcomers and other similar LEP high school students for both program years.

FIGURE 10
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS
DROPOUT RATES/PREDICTED AND OBTAINED

Group	N	DROPOUT RATES	
		Predicted Rate	Obtained Rate
1991-92			
Title VII Newcomers	104	9.1%	2.9%
Comparison Group	362	5.8%	0.3%
1990-91			
Title VII Newcomers	108	8.2%	1.9%
Comparison Group	311	7.1%	3.9%

At the high school level, the Title VII newcomers' dropout rate was lower than that of the comparison group in 1990-91 and higher than that of the comparison group in 1991-92. However, in both program years, fewer newcomers dropped out than predicted from their risk factors, indicating the success of the program in dropout prevention.

Credits Earned

High school students must earn 2.5 to 3.0 credits per semester in order to meet graduation requirements. Some students earn no grade for a course because of incompletes or unexcused absences; these credits are sometimes awarded to them later.

In each program year, Title VII newcomers earned slightly below the minimum graduation credits during the fall semester, but showed improvement in the spring semester. When compared to LEP A and B students at AISD high schools the newcomers performed at a lower rate than the comparison group in the fall semester, and at a higher rate in the spring semester.

Figure 11 shows a comparison of these groups and their credits earned.

FIGURE 11
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS
CREDITS EARNED

Group	N	Fall 1990/91 Credits Earned	N	Spring 1991/92 Credits Earned
1991-92				
Title VII Newcomers	74	2.4	83	2.5
Comparison Group	338	2.5	338	2.3
1990-91				
Title VII Newcomers	86	2.5	103	2.2
Comparison Group	289	2.3	291	1.9

Title VII newcomers were able to earn academic credits at a slightly higher rate in each semester, except fall 1991, compared to similar LEP students.

Grade Point Average

Grades are assigned on a 100-point scale with 70 being the cutoff for passing. The average of all grades received is the student's grade point average (GPA). Title VII newcomers had higher GPA's during both the fall and spring semesters than those of the comparison group. The average GPA's for both program years are shown in Figure 12.

FIGURE 12
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS
GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Group	Fall 1990/91 N	GPA	Spring 1991/92 N	GPA
1991-92				
Title VII Newcomers	74	82.3	82	83.1
Comparison Group	335	80.3	335	80.1
1990-91				
Title VII Newcomers	86	82.7	103	80.2
Comparison Group	289	78.5	286	76.5

Title VII newcomers made higher grades than similar LEP students at the high school level.

Attendance

Attendance rates were examined to see if Title VII newcomers were present for more classes than similar LEP students in the District. Newcomers attended classes at a similar rate to the comparison group during the fall 1991 semester, and at a higher rate during the other three semesters (see Figure 13).

FIGURE 13
TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. COMPARISON GROUPS
ATTENDANCE RATES

	FALL		SPRING	
GROUP	N	ATTENDANCE %	N	ATTENDANCE %
1991-92 Title VII Newcomers	80	95.1%	98	94.7%
1991-92 Comparison Group	339	95.3%	361	93.5%
1990-91 Title VII Newcomers	91	95.4%	106	92.4%
1990-91 Comparison Group	290	92.8%	311	89.9%

Title VII newcomers had higher attendance rates, except for fall 1991, than those of the comparison groups.

Orientation to the United States

The Title VII newcomers were provided with a variety of activities designed to expose and familiarize them with the culture in the United States. Some activities were in the classroom in the form of reading selections, class discussions, and small group sessions. In an effort to address some of the conflict that results from the effect of "culture shock," a bilingual psychologist was hired to conduct small group sessions with the newcomers. The psychologist made three visits to each of the schools during the fall and spring semesters. The psychologist addressed several issues including: cultural values and conflict, family and peer relationships, and substance abuse. In the evaluations the students said the presentations had been very informative, and they expressed their appreciation for having a presenter come into the classroom. The students said they liked the presentations very much and welcomed the opportunity to participate in discussions.

In the evaluations the students were asked to write down some topics that would be of interest for future discussions. The following list includes some of the issues mentioned by the newcomers:

- Information on careers and future training opportunities,
- Strategies on how to stay in school, and how to acquire skills to "get ahead" in the future,
- Family relationships and how to improve them,
- Adolescence and peer relationships,
- Sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases, and
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.

Effectiveness of the Teacher Assistants

Historical Context

The role and effectiveness of the teacher assistant (formerly, teacher aide) in the classroom is an issue that has been of interest to AISD for many years. Previous, older ORE studies have not supported the effectiveness of *elementary* bilingual aides. In 1975, ORE reported that the presence of teacher aides in the classroom did not lead to improvement in achievement. Other findings were that the teacher aides had not been adequately trained, had been utilized in several other areas aside from instruction, and that their role and place in the classroom needed additional clarification (Derby 1976). The Title VII project evaluation that same year found that the more instructional adults present in the classroom, the lower the achievement of students (see Wilkinson, 1976). As a result of these findings, "Instructional aides in the bilingual program were used to reinforce what the teacher presented but not to present information for the first time. They also helped in the preparation of materials before and after school and with testing" (Schuyler, 1987).

In 1985-86, ten years later, Schuyler (1986) conducted analyses which revealed that, on the average, students not served by a bilingual aide showed progress about the same or significantly greater than that evident for the group served by an aide. Thus, the results did not support the effectiveness of bilingual elementary aides for LEP students (Schuyler, 1986). Based partly on these findings, AISD dropped funding for all instructional aides in the elementary bilingual program; two bilingual aides were retained at the secondary level.

Beginning in 1990-91, the Title VII Newcomers Program utilized *secondary* bilingual teacher assistants, paired with bilingual teachers, as a main component of the program, thus reopening the question of the effectiveness of teacher assistants for LEP students. Rumbaut (1991) reported that staff opinion about the teacher assistants in the Newcomers Program was mixed, but she did not attempt to assess the impact of the assistants on student achievement. She noted that the effectiveness of assistants would remain an important evaluation question in the second and third years of the program.

In the second year of the Title VII Newcomers Program, **staff resources again did not permit a statistical analysis of the impact of teacher assistants on student achievement.** However, information was collected which has a bearing on the issue. Much of the national research on teacher aides in the 1960s and 1970s focused on their training and role in the classroom (Wilkinson, 1976). ORE findings in the mid-70s mirrored these concerns, suggesting that given their limited education (high school diploma or GED generally), aides had too much responsibility for the primary instruction of students.

Teacher Assistants in the Newcomers Program

The primary task of the teacher and the teacher assistant team in the Title VII Newcomers Program is to provide ESL instruction to the students. Only the teacher assistant positions are funded by the program. The teacher assistants in the Newcomers Program differ in several ways from the teacher aides of previous years. The teacher assistants in the program work only with high school level students, are under ongoing supervision, all have college degrees, and have had considerable training in issues pertaining to second language acquisition. Because their assignment is to assist with ESL instruction, the effectiveness of the teacher assistants on student achievement can be measured to the extent that they impact the newcomers' acquisition of English.

The role of the teacher assistants during the first year (1990-91) of Title VII Newcomers Program was in the process of being defined; therefore, better communication between teacher and teacher assistant was noted as one aspect of the program needing improvement (Rumbaut, 1991). As the Title VII Newcomers Program began its second year, there was more programmatic experience to build on, and the teacher assistants had been in the schools for one year. All classroom staff had been hired on time, the assistants had worked as part of a team, and the "new" (to the program) ESL teachers could benefit from the experience of the teacher assistants. The responses in both staff and student surveys conveyed a consistency in the role of the teacher assistant. Some of the problems from the previous year had been resolved, and the second year could begin with a more definitive sense of direction since guidelines had been established.

Student Survey

A list of roles or duties for the teacher assistants was given to the newcomers in the Student Survey. They were asked to mark the ways in which they were helped by the teacher assistant. The following items received the highest marks:

- Practiced English through conversation 81%
- Worked with small groups of students 80%
- Assisted in using the computer 60%
- Translated for me with other teachers 57%
- Helped with preparing school schedules 51%

Coordinator Interview

In the exit interview with the bilingual program coordinator, several questions related to the teacher assistants were asked. From the perspective of the coordinator, the assistants' role was clearly defined; most important was their bilingualism which enabled them to help students by translating for content area teachers. Also, their presence in the classroom added diversity to the instructional process. Two assistants have continued to enhance their education while in the Title VII Program (see "Educational Opportunities for Teachers and Teacher Assistants").

Summary

At the conclusion of the second year of the Title VII Newcomers Program, some questions about the effectiveness of the teacher assistants remained. Specifically, two central questions which have not yet been fully addressed by current research need consideration:

1. To what extent do the findings about elementary bilingual aides generalize to the secondary level?
2. Can teacher assistants be used in a manner which makes a significant contribution to student achievement?

From a programmatic standpoint, it is evident that the teacher assistants perform many functions, and that their role is central to the program. By assisting with academic preparation, careful planning, and working directly under the supervision of the ESL teacher, the teacher assistants relieve the ESL teachers of some of their duties and thus increase the instructional time with the ESL teacher. They in turn provide the necessary follow-up to the instruction, and assist with the small cooperative group activities. Measuring the "direct impact" or "effectiveness" that the teacher assistants have on learning will remain an important question for the evaluation during the third and final year of the Title VII Newcomers Program.

Other Findings

Training Provided to Teachers and Teacher Assistants

During both program years, Title VII funds provided orientation sessions and teacher workshops for the three program teachers and three teacher assistants. *The participants thought that the workshops were very educational and beneficial.*

Educational Opportunities for Teachers and Teacher Assistants

The teachers and teacher assistants utilized a portion of the Title VII monies available to advance their teaching credentials.

Outreach to Parents

Parents of Title VII newcomers were provided with a variety of activities designed to orient them to the school district's expectations of their children and to offer them relevant information and support.

Student Opinion

In response to a survey, the 1991-92 newcomers expressed the following opinions concerning the helpfulness of the program and staff:

- o 69% considered the program to be very helpful;
- o 86% considered the teachers to be very helpful;
- o 74% considered the teacher assistants to be very helpful.

(These opinions and those that follow were very similar to those of the first program year's students.)

Three critical components in the design of the program were:

- The time spent working on the computers and computer materials,
- The opportunity to study and practice English in three-hour blocks, and
- Studying and learning in small groups.

Almost all of the students (91%) found the computer materials "very" or "somewhat helpful." A majority of students (56%) reported time spent working on the computer was "somewhat helpful," but some students (31%) found the time on the computer "very helpful."

Cooperative learning strategies were utilized to have students work in small groups and to provide assistance and support to each other. All students found learning in small groups either "very" (73%) or "somewhat helpful" (27%). Almost all of the students found the opportunity to study and practice English three hours daily "very" (75%) or "somewhat helpful" (24%).

Feeling welcome and gaining confidence to remain in school were viewed as two areas that would assure the newcomers success in completing their high school curriculum. *Almost all of the students (94%) felt either "very" or "fairly welcome" in their school environment. All students were either "very confident" (69%) or "somewhat confident" (31%) about staying in school as a result of the program.*

The newcomers rated their abilities to read and speak English before and after their participation in the program. The students rated their skills on a scale ranging from "very well," to "fairly well," to "not at all." **In their opinion, there had been a significant improvement in speaking and reading English.** Before the program, 71% did not read or speak English at all, and after the program 66% read fairly well, and 70% spoke fairly well.

In summary, the newcomers found the program to be very beneficial not only academically but also as they made the transition to a different language and culture. The program provided a sheltered and supportive environment in which both the processes of English language acquisition and acculturation were facilitated. The teachers and teacher assistants provided classroom experiences that encouraged the students to learn and fostered the development of self-confidence. The combination of experiencing academic and personal success provided the newcomers with the impetus to continue with their studies.

Student comments from the survey:

"The teachers treated me well, [and] they helped me when I had doubts about my school work. With their help and my desire and determination to learn English, I will learn to speak English well."

"I think this program is very good for all the immigrants who do not know English.... When I miss my home country everyone encourages and reassures me."

"This is a fabulous program. Because of my teacher I have been able to become more self-assured, she is excellent and I appreciate her. Many thanks for the support given to me by the Newcomers Program."

Staff Opinion

In order to elicit opinions, ideas, concerns, and suggestions, a survey was administered in both program years to ESL teachers, teacher assistants, principals, LPAC chairpersons, and other campus staff who participated in the Title VII Newcomers Program. The following is a summary of the 1991-92 responses (which were similar to those of 1990-91).

Administrators:

The administrators regarded the program as addressing the special language needs of immigrant students. Administrators thought that a special program like the Newcomers Program can address such needs because limited-English-proficient students who have been in the U.S. for less than one year need intensive English instruction to acquire the skills to achieve and continue with school.

Teachers:

The teachers regarded the program as an opportunity for students to become successful with life and to begin the gradual process of acculturation. The three-hour block for intensive English instruction was a critical factor in accelerating the transition to English.

Teacher Assistants:

The teacher assistants thought that the program facilitated students' transition to the English language, encouraged personal growth and development, and strengthened the students' determination to complete their studies in the United States.

In summary, the opinion of the staff in general was that the program was very effective and that it assisted the students in making the transition to English and to the school culture. In their view, the Title VII Newcomers Program was successful in addressing the needs of a very specific student population by providing students with the opportunity to acquire English language skills in a sheltered environment through English

instruction in a three-hour block and other activities that assisted students in becoming successful in the total school environment. The concerns expressed and areas of improvement identified are issues that require long-term planning, which will be addressed through staff development. Specific comments from staff are provided in Attachment 1.

1991-92 Newcomer Success Stories

One of the Title VII program goals is that students gain sufficient confidence to continue with their education and eventually graduate from high school. One way of encouraging students in the attainment of this important goal is by asking them to participate in extracurricular activities. In the process of becoming involved in school activities they meet other students, practice their newly acquired English skills, and experience the school culture. Involvement with school activities familiarizes the newcomers with their school environment and, it is hoped, makes them feel welcome.

Space prohibits including all of the school activities in which the newcomers engage, but the following list provides a sample of their involvement.

> Two students were given "Pride" awards for their hard work. They had their pictures displayed on the Wall of Pride at their high school.

> In one high school four students were recipients of the 1992 AISD School Board of Trustee's scholarship, an academic scholarship which recognizes students by grade whose grade point averages (GPA) falls in the top 10% of the class. In a different high school, two freshmen and three sophomores were given the same scholarship.

> At another high school, seven newcomers (three freshmen, three sophomores, and one junior) made the honor roll during the fifth six weeks.

> At the University of Texas at Austin, students were administered the National Spanish Examination. Among the students tested were three newcomers who tied for 1st place, while another newcomer took 4th place in Level 3, the category for native speakers of Spanish.

> Thirty newcomers received tuition scholarships from the local bilingual ESL budget in order to continue receiving ESL instruction during the summer school program.

Status of Former (1990-91) Title VII Newcomers

One of the long-range goals of the Title VII Newcomers Program is to see that the students remain in school and ultimately graduate. Accordingly, information was collected on former newcomers.

Of the 108 students from school year 1990-91, most of them (85%, N = 92) returned for their second year of schooling in the United States. The remaining students (15%, N = 16) did not register in August 1991. Whether the nonreturning students relocated, transferred to another school district, or entered the working world is not known. The students continue to be at risk of dropping out because they continue to have the characteristics associated with the population that tends to drop out of high school.

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Achievement. Achievement of Title VII newcomers on both the NAPT and the TAAS continues to be lower in all areas when compared to high school students at AISD, and below the national average on the NAPT. Performance on standardized achievement examinations has historically been difficult for some language minority students.

Other Measures of School Success. See Figure 14 for a comparison of AISD high school students and 1990-91 Title VII Newcomers during the 1991-92 school year on a variety of indicators.

FIGURE 14
1990-91 TITLE VII NEWCOMERS VS. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

INDICATORS	AISD		FORMER NEWCOMERS	
	FALL '91	SPRING '92	FALL '91	SPRING '92
Attendance	92.5%	91.1%	93.7%	92.3%
Grades	80.6%	80.7%	80.3%	80.9%
Retention*	N/A	5.3%	N/A	0.9%
Dropout Rate	7.8%	X	14.8%	X
Predicted Rate**	4.6%	X	7.7%	X
Obtained Rate***	4.6%	X	5.4%	X

* Percent for the entire year. ** The percentage of program students predicted to dropout.
*** Actual percent of students who drop out; if percent is lower than what was predicted this means that the program did better than anticipated.
X = Rates are for fall semester only.

See Figure 15 for facts on former newcomers.

FIGURE 15
SALIENT FACTS ON FORMER NEWCOMERS

- **Most students have continued with their education,**
- **Most students have earned academic credits at approximately the same rate as last year,**
- **Most students have not been retained, and**
- **Most students have not dropped out at predicted rates.**

Graduation. Students coming to the United States from foreign countries must make many adjustments in order to function in American schools. Oftentimes the transcripts that they bring with them are difficult to interpret because the educational programs in their home countries are different from programs in the U.S. Among the differences in the academic programs from other countries are programs and schools for students who are university bound, are in vocational tracks, or not involved in any permanent academic plan. The diversity of educational programs, and how credit is assigned to course work in other countries, can create a problem of how those courses are comparable to educational courses in American schools. Another major difference is that some students come from rural areas that do not have educational programs beyond secondary schools (including grades 7-9), so students experiences not only vary, but may be limited.

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According to central records, 16 former newcomer students were high school seniors in 1991-92. Of the 16 students, six (38%) were able to graduate in May 1992. These newcomers were successful in accumulating the necessary academic credits, and in passing the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills which includes proficiency tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Of the remaining 10 (62%) students, all completed the fall 1991 semester. Three students withdrew in the spring 1992 semester, and two of the three withdrew with the expected number of credits and a GPA of 79.4; only one student withdrew with failing grades. In terms of other measures of school success, the seven seniors maintained a GPA of 82.2, and they earned an average of 2.7 academic credits in the fall semester. The spring semester was very similar inasmuch as the average of academic credits stayed the same, and the GPA of 81.6 was slightly less than the fall semester.

Separate interviews were conducted with two graduating seniors in an effort to identify some of the characteristics that had contributed to the students' success. Descriptive profiles of the two students are provided in Attachment 2.

Costs

Students in the Title VII Newcomers Program received varying amounts of service, which was due primarily to the high degree of mobility in the immigrant population. For example, in the spring 1992 semester, nine students were "mainstreamed" into a regular schedule because they had either completed their two semesters or were ready for a regular ESL classroom environment. Of the 104 students served throughout the 1991-92 school year, two students withdrew during the fall semester, and four completed the fall semester, but did not register for the spring semester. During the spring semester five students withdrew at different intervals, they completed the work of the fall semester. One student was served briefly during the spring semester had then to relocate.

The cost per student was calculated in two ways. The first calculation was made by dividing the total cost of the program by the total number of students served . This calculation resulted in a cost of $1,296 per student for the 1990-91 academic year and $1,346 per student for the 1991-92 academic year. In the second calculation, the entry and exit dates for each student were examined with the purpose of determining how many days the student had been in attendance. Once days of attendance had been established the number of contact hours could be ascertained. Based on the days of attendance it was calculated that there had been 77,886 contact hours during the 1991-92 school year. Dividing the budget ($140,000) by the total number of contact hours resulted in a cost of $1.63 per 1990-91 contact hour and $1.80 per 1991-92 contact hour.

CONCLUSIONS

The recognition is growing that schools do not serve the same clientele as they used to. Among the nontraditional kinds of students with which schools must now deal, the LEP student population is one of the fastest growing. Compounding the challenge of educating LEP or non-English speaking students is the number of high school-aged students who are arriving in the U.S., with little formal education, and who are facing the traditional hardship for immigrants of coming to grips with a new language and culture. Unless successful school programs are developed for these students, they may simply not make the transition, not only in school but in the society at large.

In AISD, the Title VII Newcomers Program has provided a wide range of services to address this challenge. Limited-English-proficient (LEP) students, their parents, their teachers, and teacher assistants have benefitted from Title VII funds. Despite the considerable obstacles of language and cultural adjustment, program students demonstrated their commitment to attending school and to moving forward with their education. The newcomers performed better on such measures as attendance, grades, credits earned, and dropout rate than a comparison group. Program staff reported that the program was effective and beneficial to the newcomers. Many program strengths were identified, and weaknesses were targeted as areas for growth and improvement. For these reasons, through its second year the Title VII Newcomers Program may be seen as helping students to acquire some of the critical skills for ensuring academic success.

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Positive Findings According to Program Staff:

The following list from the Staff Survey includes most of the program activities that in the opinion of the staff worked well:

- The implementation of picture dictionaries, 10-minute silent reading, daily oral language exercises, and three hours to teach and reinforce language concepts and skills;
- The utility of computers and related technologies to classroom instruction, especially touch window and TAAS software;
- The ordering and receiving of new materials in a timely manner for the classroom, testing, and paperwork specifically related to the program;
- Having teacher assistants to support the instructional efforts of the teacher;
- The "excellent" cooperation between program teachers, bilingual coordinator, and teacher assistants;
- The orientation to the American culture and educational system; and
- Mainstreaming former students into core classes and appropriate placement of current students.

Program Components in Need of Remediation According to Program Staff:

Among the activities mentioned as not having worked well and/or in need of improvement were the following.

- Particular classroom textbooks were not useful.
- The allocation of credits based on academic records from home countries could be more structured and systematic.
- Additional flexibility for ESL teachers to participate in the process of determining how many hours of English would be best for incoming students.
- There is a need to set time aside to create the necessary opportunities to explain the program and its goals to the entire school staff.
- There were changes in staffing that required adjustment and additional role clarification.
- The role of the teacher assistant could be further explained and clarified.
- It is important to develop strategies to coordinate and identify entering students and to complete all of the necessary paperwork in a timely manner.

Areas of Concern According to Program Staff:

From the Staff Survey the following specific concerns about the current year's program implementation were identified:

- Three periods come out of the campus teacher allocations, and this schedule adjustment often creates the problem of either very small classes or class overloads in other areas.
- There is a question as to whether the needs of Vietnamese students are being addressed.
- There needs to be more discussion of the program's curriculum and if it should be uniform at all three sites.
- Better textbooks for classroom use are necessary.
- The Title VII Newcomers Program needs to be recognized as an integral part of the entire school.
- Additional cultural sensitivity workshops for content area teachers and administrators are important to facilitate mainstreaming of newcomers in the future.
- An increase in staff development workshops on ESL methodology for both content area and ESL teachers and workshops on utilizing computers for instructional purposes would be beneficial.

Staff Suggestions for Program Improvement During its Third Year:

- Give more support and instruction to Title VII Newcomer Program students in mathematics (algebra) and science (physical) through the program.

- Provide more staff development for administrators, content area teachers, and ESL teachers on cultural differences and awareness, cooperative learning strategies, and how to maximize use of computer technology in the classroom.

- ESL teachers and teacher assistants should work together in the summer to plan for program guidelines and to prepare curriculum that would be consistent at all program sites.

- Pretest in math to assure appropriate placement for all students.

- Allow more flexibility in scheduling students who may need less than three hours of ESL instruction, and make provision for better books at varying instructional levels.

The program evaluation for the second year included a list of teacher characteristics considered to be essential by the program coordinator to the success of the program. Among the identified characteristics were:

- Commitment to students,
- Ability to work well with the teacher assistant,
- Cultural sensitivity,
- High motivation and the ability to motivate others,
- Enthusiasm, and
- Ability to find and utilize community resources.

From classroom observations made throughout the year by the bilingual coordinator it was noted that all of the teachers were:

- Highly motivated,
- Able to solve problems,
- Capable of working well with the teacher assistant, and
- Aware of cultural differences and had made every possible effort to incorporate the diversity of the various cultural groups into the learning experience.

The finding and utilizing of community resources will continue to be an area needing further development. The administrators said that teacher and teacher assistant relationships were professional and functioned well.

ATTACHMENT 2

PROFILES OF TWO GRADUATING FORMER TITLE VII STUDENTS

MARGARITA

Margarita (not student's real name) is from a rural community in southern Mexico in the state of Guerrero. She had been enrolled in her last year of preparatory school with an emphasis in business administration, and had made plans towards attending a Mexican university. Shortly after her arrival in the U.S., she registered at one of the program high schools. Margarita had no previous experience or training in English; all of her schooling had been in Spanish.

Margarita found her teacher and teacher assistant to be very helpful. They provided much encouragement and made learning English a reality. Her fellow classmates also contributed to her learning and making the transition to a new environment and culture. Margarita was able to compete in a poetry contest through her high school Spanish class and won 3rd place. She and her newcomer classmates needed to feel useful, and took it upon themselves to beautify their campus by planting trees. She received recognition from the student honor society by being the recipient of a green medal.

Her father provided encouragement and support, he attended school meetings, and intervened when she was in the process of having her Mexican transcript appraised. Her plans after graduation are to continue improving her English and to attend the local community college.

Her advice to students is the following: "Study hard and do everything you can possibly do to learn. Make the decision to finish with your schooling it will be difficult; but it is possible [to finish]."

To the Newcomer Program, she says, "Give the students support, assist them in their feelings of aloneness. Tell them [students] they can get beyond the language barrier and eventually graduate. Help them understand the relationships between the different classes, how and what those classes are like, and how they are part of a graduation plan."

ROLANDO

Rolando (not student's real name) had been in the United States two months before enrolling in the Title VII Newcomers Program. He came from a rural community in the central part of San Luis Potosi. He had completed two years and three months of preparatory school and was looking forward to university training. He had a little bit of training in English while he was in Mexico. Rolando relocated to join his family that had preceded him in moving to the United States. At the time of his move, his intention was to work, not to attend school.

School had been confusing at first; it took two months before he was placed in the program. The Newcomers program was in its initial phases, and was in the process of acquiring computers and instructional materials. It took Rolando a semester before he felt comfortable with school. His teacher was very helpful, and when he experienced a difficulty she took a special interest in assisting him in finding a solution. Rolando found the program very helpful in adjusting to school, and in learning.

Rolando frequently worked after school, and on weekends with a lawn service. The woman he works for has been very nice and has encouraged him to continue with his studies. His plans are to keep on working until the necessary arrangements are made, so he can attend college. He would like to study a profession that deals with building construction, some type of engineering, or architecture.

His mother was very supportive, and she provided him with encouragement and moral support. Because of her work schedule she was unable to attend meetings or come to school frequently. She was able to attend one of the parent lectures with the bilingual psychologist.

His advice to his fellow newcomers is, "Put forth a great deal of effort. It [school] will be difficult. Try to establish relationships with English-speaking students, so you can practice your English skills. Make sure you utilize the opportunity of participating in the Newcomers program."

To the Newcomers program, he says, "Help students with time management, assist them with learning how to make the best use of it [time]. The age of students makes a difference in terms of levels of maturity; help them discover where they want to go."